Preparing for the Online Grade 8 Writing Prompt Field Test

The purpose of this document is to serve as a collection of General Information (**GI**) and Helpful Tips (**HT**) to assist individuals preparing students to take an online form of the Grade 8 Writing Prompt Field Test. Those students assigned to complete an online form of the Grade 8 Writing Prompt Field Test will use the TestNav™ software to complete their test. Participating school divisions are strongly encouraged to provide students with the opportunity to experience and become familiar with the TestNav online writing environment prior to participating in the Grade 8 Writing Prompt Field Test. The General Information (**GI**) and Helpful Tips (**HT**) provided below may be used with the "Grade 8 Writing Prompt Training Test" available within the Training Center in PEMSolutions.

GI #1: After logging into an online writing test in TestNav, the directions screen with information about various key strokes or hot keys for cutting, pasting, and copying will appear. Use of these hot keys (e.g. Ctrl - C, Ctrl - X, Ctrl – V) may be familiar to students, as they are commonly used in many computer applications.

HT #1: The hot keys for cutting, pasting, and copying are NOT printed on the bottom of the Training Center test ticket. The directions screen is the only location where these are displayed. Buttons or icons for these features are present, however, on the writing screen. (see HT #6.)
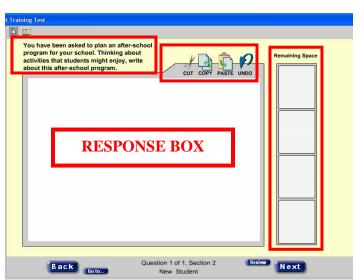
GI #2: After clicking 'Next' on the directions screen, the Writing Prompt will appear at the top of the screen and the "Checklist for Writers" will appear below that. This checklist shown mirrors the checklist used with the paper/pencil version of the writing test. Students may access the checklist any time during the test by clicking on the 'Exhibit Window' icon (an open book) in the upper left corner of the screen.

HT #2: The 'Checklist for Writers' is not interactive. Students cannot mark the checklist electronically; however, a clean, printed copy of the approved Grade 8 "Checklist for Writers" may be provided to students during the test. As with all test materials, any printed copies of the checklist must be collected prior to dismissing students from the test environment.

GI #3: After clicking 'Next' on the 'Checklist for Writers' screen, the response screen will appear.

The writing prompt is displayed in the upper left and the students type their response in the white response box in the center of the screen. The student types, edits, views and reviews their final response on this screen.

HT #3: The student can monitor the amount of text entered for their response by observing the four 'Remaining Space' pages on the screen to the right of the response box. These small pages will provide an ongoing visual representation of the amount of writing space used and/or remaining.

HT #4: A pop-up warning will appear on the screen when students approach the maximum number of lines available for their response. The warning will state 'ERROR: The maximum number of lines has been reached OR will be exceeded.' Please note that this does NOT indicate a testing error has occurred. It serves only as a warning that the student's remaining writing space is limited.

HT #5: Using hard returns (pressing the 'enter' or 'return' key to proceed to the next line) may consume valuable response space. Students should allow the text to 'wrap' on the screen or automatically continue to the next line.

HT #6: The Cut, Copy, Paste, and Undo/Redo icons function in a manner similar to other word processing programs. For example, highlighting an area of text with the mouse and clicking on a specific icon will allow a student to perform that icon's function. The Undo icon becomes a Redo icon after each time it is used. For example, a student may cut and paste a portion of their text into another location. Clicking the Undo icon would return the text to its original location. The Undo icon would then appear as a Redo icon that, if used next, would return the text back to the initial changed location.

GI #4: Once the student has completed entering their response, they will click on 'Next' to bring up the review screen. At this point, students may return to the prompt and their response by clicking on the link for Question 1 or they may click 'Submit' to submit their field test response. A Reminder: No reports will be available for the Grade 8 Writing Prompt Field Test or Training Test.